

REMARKS

This Request for Reconsideration is responsive to the Office Action dated April 23, 2007 and received in this application. Applicant appreciates the indication of allowable subject matter regarding claims 7-8 and 15-16. However, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of rejected claims 1-6 and 9-14.

Applicant appreciates the Examiner's attention to the specification and provides herewith a substitute specification to overcome the noted objections. Reconsideration of the objection to the drawings is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-2 and 5 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Pat. No. 6,754,446 to Hagimori et al. ("Hagimori"). This rejection is traversed.

Claim 1 recites: *[a] zoom lens of the type having a plurality of lens groups and varying in power in response to variation in intervals between the lens groups, which comprises a reflecting member to bend the optical axis passing through the lens groups and a last lens group, counted from the object side, which is composed of a negative lens group and a positive lens group, with an air layer interposed between them (arranged sequentially from the object side).*

These claimed features are not disclosed by Hagimori. The Examiner references FIG. 7 in contending that the features are disclosed. FIG. 7 discloses a plurality of lens groups Gr1-Gr5, but does not disclose Applicant's claimed feature of having the last group composed of a negative lens group and a positive lens group arranged sequentially from the object side and having an air gap between them.

The last lens group in FIG. 7 of Hagimori is a single lens that has a weak negative refracting power. As explicitly stated therein, the last lens group Gr5 "comprises only a lens element L11 having a positive meniscus configuration concave to the object side." This relied upon embodiment thus quite clearly does not disclose or in any way suggest Applicant's claimed invention.

Furthermore, Applicant submits that no embodiment of Hagimori discloses the above-recited features. Each and every embodiment disclosed therein either comprises (1) solely a positive lens or (2) a multi-lens group that ends in a negative lens, and thus fails to disclose the last group composed of a negative lens group and a positive lens group arranged sequentially from the object side and having an air gap between them, as claimed.

Claim 1 is thus neither disclosed nor suggested by Hagimori. Claims 2 and 5 depend from claim 1 and thus incorporate the features not found in Hagimori. For that reason as well as for their separately recited, patentably distinct features, claims 2 and 5 are also neither disclosed nor suggested by Hagimori.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1, 2 and 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Hagimori.

Claims 3, 4, 6 and 9-14 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hagimori in view of U.S. Pat. No. 6,807,014 to Kawasaki (“Kawasaki”). This rejection is traversed.

Claims 3, 4 and 6 depend from claim 1 and thus incorporate the features recited therein and described above. These features are absent from Hagimori as described regarding claim 1.

Kawasaki does not remedy the deficiencies of Hagimori. As with Hagimori, Kawasaki discloses the last lens group as a positive lens group, and thus also fails to disclose “*a last lens group, counted from the object side, which is composed of a negative lens group and a positive lens group, with an air layer interposed between them (arranged sequentially from the object side),*” as claimed by Applicant.

The proposed combination of Hagimori and Kawasaki thus fails to disclose, alone or in combination, the features recited in dependent claims 3, 4 and 6. For similar reasons, claims 9-14 are also neither disclosed nor suggested by the proposed combination.

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Amendment dated July 23, 2007
Reply to Office Action of April 23, 2007

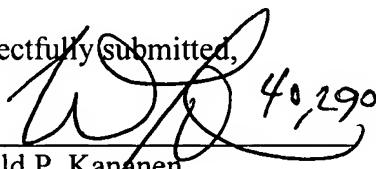
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Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 3, 4, 6 and 9-14 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hagimori and Kawasaki.

Applicant believes no fee is due with this response. However, if a fee is due, please charge our Deposit Account No. 18-0013, under Order No. SON-3095 from which the undersigned is authorized to draw.

Dated: July 23, 2007

Respectfully submitted,

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